



Today's Speak Easy

Board Hears Request for Alcohol Impact Area

Washington State Liquor Control Board

The Liquor Control Board held a public meeting in November to hear a request from the City of Seattle to formally recognize an alcohol impact area in Pioneer Square. An alcohol impact area (AIA) is an area of a city or town that is experiencing significant problems with chronic public inebriation or illegal activity associated with alcohol sales or consumption.

The Board adopted the AIA rules in 1999, at the request of communities experiencing significant problems with chronic public inebriation. Under these rules, a local jurisdiction can request that the Liquor Control Board formally recognize an AIA after the city or town has first attempted to address the problems through community-based, voluntary efforts. The local jurisdiction must also provide documentation to show there is a pervasive pattern of public intoxication and/or public consumption of alcohol within the AIA. It is important to note that an AIA is not meant to be the only answer in response to a serious and complex problem--it is meant to be one tool in combination with other programs to address the unique needs of a community.

If the Liquor Control Board recognizes the AIA in Pioneer Square, the agency would give local jurisdictions more time to review liquor license applications and renewals for businesses inside the AIA. The City is also requesting that the Board adopt the following alcohol sales restrictions:

- Restrict grocery and convenience stores in the AIA from selling certain types of high alcohol content/low cost beers and wines.
- Prohibit the off-premises (to-go) sale of beer in single cans or bottles in the AIA.
- Prohibit the off-premises sale of alcohol between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m. in the AIA.

Tacoma was the first city to have an AIA formally recognized by the Liquor Control Board. It was approved by the Board in December, 2001. Like the City of Seattle, Tacoma requested that the Board restrict the off-premises sale of certain high alcohol content/low cost beers and wines. A lot was learned through the process with Tacoma, and the Board will continue to bring all parties to the table to find a workable and meaningful method of identifying products that are being abused by chronic public inebriates.

Statewide Alcohol Emphasis Patrol takes place during Holidays

by Letty Mendez

“Drive Hammered. Get Nailed.” That is the message from the Liquor Control Board and the Traffic Safety Commission this Holiday Season.

Your involvement is needed to inform customers of the statewide law enforcement emphasis patrol, which will take place over the holidays. This emphasis focuses on illegal liquor sales and impaired drivers.

This is a good time to remind your employees of the importance of not selling alcohol to minors or intoxicated persons. If they sell alcohol to someone who is underage, both, you and your employee are legally responsible. If your employees serve or sell alcohol, make sure their servers' permits are up-to-date and have adequate training.

To prevent the deaths caused by drunk driving, we urge people to use a designated, sober driver. A DUI citation costs at least \$5,000, the loss of a driver's license, jail time, and a whole host of other penalties. Our best protection against a drunk driver is to drive sober, alert and with our seatbelt buckled.

Thank you for your support in making this a safe holiday season for everyone.

Keep Alcohol and Tobacco Out of the Hands of Minors *by Tricia Currier*

Youth who begin drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence. You, the servers, clerks, bartenders, and liquor licensees, are the first line of defense against youth access to alcohol and tobacco. You can make a difference in a young person's life simply by not selling them alcohol or tobacco. Remember, you have the right to refuse service.

The Liquor Control Board conducts compliance checks throughout the state to ensure our state's alcohol and tobacco laws are followed.

During the month of November, liquor enforcement officers conducted 93 liquor compliance checks throughout the state. A total of 26 sales of alcohol were made to minors. This is a 73% compliance rate. The average compliance rate for the past year is 83%.

Also during the month of November, liquor enforcement officers conducted 996 tobacco compliance checks with 101 sales to minors. This represents an 90% compliance rate. The average compliance rate for the past year is 91%.

The Liquor Control Board provides free I.D. and Overservice training to assist you in reading identification, spotting fake I.D. and recognizing signs of intoxication. Contact your nearest enforcement office to take advantage of this free training; we rely on your vigilance.

Conducting an in-house Controlled Purchase Program by Tricia Currier

Under specific guidelines and with prior approval by the Board, retail liquor licensees may conduct their own compliance checks using minors.

The purpose of allowing licensees to conduct private compliance checks, or “in-house controlled purchase programs,” is so licensees can evaluate their employee training to prevent the sale of alcohol to minors. In a controlled situation, the licensee would hire an eighteen, nineteen, or twenty year old person to attempt to purchase alcohol.

A couple points:

- √ The rules outline specific guidelines for controlled purchase programs.
- √ Licensees must receive prior written approval from the Liquor Control Board before conducting a controlled purchase program.
- √ The Board's approval will be based on the licensee submitting a written plan. The plan must contain:
 - The location(s) at which the licensee would like to conduct controlled purchase programs.
 - The name and contact phone of the person who will be on the premises supervising, who must be at least twenty-one years of age.
 - The licensee's written procedures for the program.
- √ Licensees can use their own employees or can contract with a third party to conduct a controlled purchased program.
 - The persons participating in the program may not use fraudulent identification and should not be deceptively mature in appearance.
- √ A licensee may not terminate an employee solely for a first-time failure to comply with the licensee's policies regarding the sale of alcohol.
- √ The Board may revoke its approval to conduct in-house controlled purchase programs if the licensee's program fails to meet any of the requirements. It is the licensee's responsibility to ensure the program meets the requirements of the law and rules.

For more information, contact your local enforcement office. For a copy of the rules on private compliance checks, chapter 314-21 WAC, please go to our website at www.liq.wa.gov (go to “Laws & Regulations,” and then “Current Laws & Regulations.”)

Enforcement Office Locations

Olympia
Vancouver
Tacoma
Seattle
Kent
Everett
Bremerton
Bellingham
Wenatchee
Yakima
Kennewick
Spokane

Phone Number

(360) 753-6271
(360) 260-6115
(253) 471-4589
(206) 464-6094
(253) 872-6386
(425) 513-5114
(360) 478-4500
(360) 676-2073
(509) 662-0408
(509) 575-2763
(509) 734-7170
(509) 625-5513

FYI

Updated handbooks for liquor licenses and employees are available online at **<http://www.liq.wa.gov/publications/publications.asp>**

There are two books, one for on-premises establishments (restaurants and taverns), and one for off-premises (grocery and convenience stores). Please contact your nearest enforcement office for a hard copy.

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